



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/774,451	01/30/2001	Farrukh S. Najmi	SUN1P817	3454

22434 7590 07/06/2005
BEYER WEAVER & THOMAS LLP
P.O. BOX 70250
OAKLAND, CA 94612-0250

EXAMINER

ALPERT, JAMES M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3624

DATE MAILED: 07/06/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/774,451

Applicant(s)

NAJMI, FARRUKH S.

Examiner

James Alpert

Art Unit

3624

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 January 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

The application has been examined, and Claims 1-21 are pending. Objections and rejections are as stated below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, this claim refers to "setting an expiration time for the published message," yet no indication is given as to when the time for expiration should begin. Would the counting down begin when the message is first published to the broker, or when the message is published in a "multicast" to the potential sellers? This is confusing, and appropriate correction is required. For purposes of advancing prosecution, the Examiner will treat the claim as referring to the multicast of the message as when the potential expiration of time starts being measured.

Claims 3-9,12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 113, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In particular, Claim 3 is dependent from Claim1, and describes receiving messages at a plurality of "e-business entities". However, Claim 1 makes no reference to an "e-business entities", but rather, simply "entities". Therefore, there is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. For purposes of

Art Unit: 3624

advancing prosecution, the Examiner will treat each of the claims listed above as referring simply to the "entities" of Claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

With regard to Claims 1,16 Mandler teaches a buyer/seller/broker intermediary system & method wherein buyers place Request for Quotes (FRQ) with a broker who then forwards the information to a plurality of sellers for consideration and response. See (Col. 3, lines 48-58). Mandler does not expressly teach the publish/subscribe system & method described by the Applicant, however this an old and well-known process exemplified by Bhatt. Bhatt discloses the following:

subscribing to a service interface a certain plurality of entities;
(Col. 5, lines 48-52)

publishing the message by a first entity;
(Col. 2, line 64 – Col. 3, line 5)

determining the selected ones of the plurality of entities to receive the message ; and
(Col. 3, line 66 – Col. 4, line 3)

publishing the message to the selected ones of the plurality of entities based upon the determining. (Col. 11, lines 56-66)

Also, for each of the four (4) limitations above, see generally (Bhatt, Claims 1-2).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time Applicant's invention was made to combine the teachings of Mandler, relating to a

Art Unit: 3624

broker/intermediary between buyers and sellers, with the teachings of Bhat relating to a publish/subscribe method. The motivation for such a combination can be found in both references. In Bhatt, the use of the publish/subscribe system is contemplated for the electronic commerce arts at (Bhatt, Col. 1, lines 24-28), which describes how the nature of business events triggers the system. More importantly, however, Mandler suggest using improved computer technologies at (Col.2, line 65 – Col. 3, line 29) to reduce distribution cost, expand markets for sellers, and allowing buyers to price shop among sellers via electronic commerce for optimal price and selection of goods.

With regard to Claims 2,21 in terms of initial limitation, as well as the last limitation, comprising:

setting an expiration time for the published message; and
and purging the message when the expiration period lapses,

the Examiner observes that an expiration time is a well known aspect of publish/subscribe system & method. Bhatt and Mandler do not expressly teach this limitation, however it would be considered part of the teachings of Mandler/Bhatt combination. Bhatt does disclose the remaining two limitations:

retaining the published message;
(Col. 11, lines 62-66)

determining if an appropriate one of the plurality of entities has subsequently subscribed to the service interface so as to be identified to receive the message;
(Col. 12, lines 2-8)

Again, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time Applicant's invention was made to combine the teachings of Mandler, relating to a broker/intermediary between buyers and sellers, with the teachings of Bhat relating to

Art Unit: 3624

sorting out new subscriber/sellers. The motivation for such a combination can be found in both references. In Bhatt, the use of the publish/subscribe system is contemplated for the electronic commerce arts at (Bhatt, Col. 1, lines 24-28), which describes how the nature of business events triggers the system. More importantly, however, Mandler suggest using improved computer technologies at (Col.2, line 65 – Col. 3, line 29) to reduce distribution cost, expand markets for sellers, and allowing buyers to price shop among sellers via electronic commerce for optimal price and selection of goods.

With regard to Claims 3,17 Mandler teaches the system & method comprising:

receiving the message at each of the selected ones of the plurality of entities;
(Col. 4, lines 25-29)

reviewing the message at each of the selected ones of the plurality of entities;
(Col. 4, lines 29-31, which implicitly contains a review of the RFQ)

and determining if a response to the message is to be generated at each of the selected ones of the plurality of e-business entities based upon the reviewing.
(Col. 4, lines 29-31)

With regard to Claims 4,18 Mandler teaches the system & method comprising:

publishing the response to the service interface based upon the determining;
(Col. 4, lines 29-31)

publishing the response to the broker by the service interface; and
(Col. 4, lines 29-31)

publishing the response to the first entity by the broker.
(Col. 4, lines 29-31)

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time Applicant's invention was made to combine the teachings of Bhat relating to a publish/subscribe method with the teachings of Mandler providing for the review of incoming messages and the response thereto. The motivation for such a combination

Art Unit: 3624

can be found in both references. In Bhatt, the use of the publish/subscribe system is contemplated for the electronic commerce arts at (Bhatt, Col. 1, lines 24-28), which describes how the nature of business events triggers the system. As well, Mandler suggest using improved computer technologies at (Mandler, Col.2, line 65 – Col. 3, line 12). An obvious business application is to publish responses to the RFQ's so as to consummate a transaction.

With regard to Claim 5, Mandler nor Bhat teach the method wherein:

the responding ones of the plurality of entities are each anonymous to the first entity.

The examiner takes Official Notice that anonymous publishing is old and well known in the art, and is a common occurrence in a publish/subscribe scenario. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art modify the teachings of Mandler to expressly include anonymous publishing. The motivation for such a combination is to expand the number of applications available to users of the system.

With regard to Claim 6, Mandler does not teaches the method comprising:

publishing the response directly to the first entity based upon the determining.

However, once the seller knows the identity of the buyer, an inherent part of the system is that the seller can then either continue to process the RFQ using the broker, OR if so inclined, initiate communication with the buyer directly. Mandler thus anticipates this claim as well.

With regard to Claim 7, Mandler specifically emphasizes that buyers and sellers need not have previously conducted business together. Even so, there is nothing in the

Art Unit: 3624

disclosure that indicates the buyer or seller can not know each other. Thus inherent to the system is the idea that in some cases, the responding ones of the plurality of entities are each known to the first entity.

With regard to Claim 8, Mandler teaches the method comprising:

publishing the response to the service interface based upon the determining;
(Col. 4, lines 29-31)

publishing the response to the broker by the service interface; and
(Col. 4, lines 29-31)

With regard to Claim 9, Mandler specifically emphasizes that buyers and sellers need not have previously conducted business together. Even so, there is nothing in the disclosure that indicates the buyer or seller can not know each other. Thus inherent to the system is the idea that in some cases, the responding ones of the plurality of entities are each known to the first entity.

With regard to Claims 10,19 Mandler teaches a system and method wherein:

the message is a request for a quote (RFQ).
(Col. 7, lines 21-27)

With regard to Claims 11,20 Mandler teaches a system and method wherein:

the response is a quote.
(Col. 7, lines 39-40)

With regard to Claim 12, Mandler teaches a method wherein:

the first entity is included in a first enterprise computer system and wherein at least one of the responding entities is included in a second enterprise computing system.
(Col. 6, lines 22-40)

With regard to Claim 13, Mandler teaches a method wherein:

the first and the second enterprise computing systems are different enterprise computing systems. (Col. 6, lines 40-43)

With regard to Claim 14, Mandler does not expressly teaches a method wherein:

the first enterprise computing systems is an ebXML based enterprise computing system.

However, the examiner observes that unless the use of a specific operating system or programming language is *critical or uniquely required* for implementation of the claimed method, very little patentable weight is given to claims identifying one operating system or programming language.

Even so, the examiner observes that ebXML is more or less a framework for developing a business transaction vocabulary that is based on XML. Bhatt teaches using XML in its operation of a publish/subscribe system at (Col. 3, lines 50-57). As such, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time Applicant's invention was made to combine the teachings of Mandler, relating to a broker/intermediary between buyers and sellers, with the teachings of Bhat relating to a publish/subscribe method based on XML. The motivation for such a combination is found in Mandler at (Col.2, line 65 – Col. 3, line 29) which suggests using improved computer technologies to reduce distribution cost, expand markets for sellers, and allow buyers to price shop among sellers via electronic commerce for optimal price and selection of goods.

With regard to Claim 15, Mandler does not expressly teach the method wherein:

the second enterprise computing systems is an ebXML based enterprise computing system.

However, the examiner observes that unless the use of a specific operating system or programming language is *critical or uniquely required* for implementation of the claimed method, very little patentable weight is given to claims identifying one operating system or programming language.

Even so, the examiner observes that ebXML is more or less a framework for developing a business transaction vocabulary that is based on XML. Bhatt teaches using XML in its operation of a publish/subscribe system at (Col. 3, lines 50-57). As such, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time Applicant's invention was made to combine the teachings of Mandler, relating to a broker/intermediary between buyers and sellers, with the teachings of Bhat relating to a publish/subscribe method based on XML. The motivation for such a combination is found in Mandler at (Col.2, line 65 – Col. 3, line 29) which suggests using improved computer technologies to reduce distribution cost, expand markets for sellers, and allow buyers to price shop among sellers via electronic commerce for optimal price and selection of goods.

Conclusion

The following prior art, made of record, but not relied upon, is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

Collision, U.S. Patent Application Publication #20010032267, October 18, 2001, Method and Apparatus for Anonymous Subject-Based Addressing.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James Alpert whose telephone number is (571) 272-

Art Unit: 3624

6738. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30-6:00. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vincent Millin can be reached on (571) 272-6747. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197. Respectfully submitted,

James M. Alpert
June 22, 2005

VINCENT MILLIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600

